



Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Monthly Progress Report May 2014

Throughout May, designated as National Bike Month, the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center supported 36 National Bike to School Day and Bike Month events. The Outreach team held more than 120 meetings and presented 22 times. One new Partner enrolled and two previously withdrawn Partners returned to the program. The Resource Center currently has 414 Partners in five territories. Highlights for each territory are below.

During May, the Resource Center team planned for the Georgia SRTS Statewide Forum to be held on June 6th. The one-day event will include breakout sessions, a networking session featuring statewide Friends, and keynote featuring school siting policy work by the Georgia Conservancy. The outreach team coordinated speakers and invited a variety of SRTS stakeholders. On May 30th, more than 70 people had registered to attend.

Outreach Summaries

Metro Atlanta Territory – Nichole Hollis, School Outreach Coordinator

Nichole currently maintains 129 Partners in the Metro Atlanta Territory. During May, Nichole supported 16 Bike and Walk to School Day Events in her territory and attended events at **Hembree Springs Elementary School**, **Gideon's Elementary School**, and **Summerour Middle School**. She focused on providing Bike Safety Education materials to schools and presenting information about the Safe Route to School Resource Center and its bike safety initiatives. Nichole began planning summer initiatives with the **Safe Kids Clayton Coalition**, **CampSPARC in Grant Park** and **Torah Day Schools of Atlanta**.

On May 23rd, Nichole presented **Kayla Grant**, from **Parkside Elementary School**, with a Certificate for the **National Saris Bike Poster Contest**. Fifth grade students created a poster inspired by President Kennedy's quote, "Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride." Kayla Placed 3rd in Georgia and was awarded a helmet. In addition, her school also awarded her with an art kit. Nichole also presented parents with information about the Safe Routes to School Resource Center and spoke about the Bike and Walk to School Day events that are organized at the school. See photo of Nichole with Kayla at right.



Nichole supported and attended three Bike to School Day Events:

- **Summerour Middle School** had more than 200 students participate in their Bike and Walk to School Day event on May 14th. **Safe Kids Gwinnett Coalition**, **Sustainable Norcross**, **City of Norcross**, and **Gwinnett Village CID** helped to organize the event. Students had the opportunity to participate in a raffle for walking and biking to school; three students were awarded with bike helmets. Nichole helped to reward the students and also gave a



presentation during their assembly about the importance of walking and biking to school safely. More than 50 students walk and bike to school here daily.

See photo at right.

- **Gideon's Elementary School** had 30 students to participate in their Walk and Bike to school Day Event on May 21st. Students walked from their school to the after-school program at Pittman Park Recreation Center. They were given bike safety bookmarks and pencils for walking. **The Atlanta Regional Safe Routes to School Network** and **The Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association** also helped to organize the event.
- **Hembree Springs Elementary School** had 12 students participate in their Bike to School Day Event. **Bike Roswell** supported the event by sponsoring a raffle for new bikes. Hembree Springs Elementary School recently signed on as a new partner and has participated in its first Georgia Walk to School Day and International Walk to School Day already this year.

Dunbar Elementary School hosted a Health Fair Event for parents at the school. Safe Routes to School and the **Atlanta Safe Routes to School Regional Network** distributed information to more than 50 parents about the benefits of their children walking and biking to school. During the event, we also discussed with parents safe pathways that are accessible for walking students to the school. At the event, Nichole shared future activities planned with the organization **City Camp** in Atlanta, related to teaching Child Pedestrian Safety lessons during the summer months.

In June, Nichole plans to reach out to existing and new stakeholders and conduct a **NTSHA curriculum presentation** at **MARTA Headquarters**. MARTA, in an effort to train staff on pedestrian safety, has requested that the Resource Center provide the NHTSA training. She will also plan a travel plan meeting with **Springdale Park Elementary School's** taskforce group to discuss future steps on implementing the plan next school year.

East Central Territory - Taki Smith, School Outreach Coordinator

Taki currently maintains 78 Partners in the East Central Territory. During May, Taki presented to various Friend organizations, attended SRTS meetings, composed the SRTS Wayfinding May Newsletter edition, updated the Resource Center Facebook page, promoted Bike to School Month, planned for the statewide SRTS forum, collected Student Travel Tallies, and conducted a Child Pedestrian Safety Train-the-Trainer, National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) workshop.

Taki had eight schools participate in Bike to School Month. Several schools in her territory opted to host bike safety assemblies and to send educational bike safety tip sheets home with students, instead of hosting Bike to School Day events. On May 5th, Taki presented at a bike safety assembly at **Greenbrier Elementary School**, located in Columbia County, to kick-off their Bike to School Day. The **Safe Kids Coalition-Greater Augusta Coordinator, Irene Hopkins**, Friend of the Resource Center, also facilitated the assembly. Taki later attended Bike to School Day at Greenbrier Elementary School on May 7th. Greenbrier had more than 20 students ride their bikes to school.

School Partner, **River Ridge Elementary School** in Columbia County, produced the state's first-place winner in the 5th Grade Saris Bicycle Poster Contest. **Katelyn Surrao** was presented with a certificate and her framed poster at an Art Awards Day ceremony on May 15th. Katelyn also received a bicycle, helmet, and bike light. See photo of Taki with Katelyn at right.



Hampton Elementary School, in Henry County, was awarded as the School Partner of the Year for the East Central Territory on May 23rd. The school participated in International Walk to School Day in October and Georgia Walk to School Day in March. Hampton Elementary School is known for creating a “Sidewalk Café” on Walk to School Days, providing coffee to parents and healthy snacks to students. The school also hosted a SRTS Facebook Promotion event where Taki and students promoted SRTS at the school as well as no idling. The school is also a partner with the **Clean Air Campaign**, a Friend of the Resource Center. See photo of awardees with Taki and their Golden Shoe at right.



Taki conducted nine presentations during May. She presented at PTO meetings, health fairs, awards day ceremonies, stakeholder meetings, and safety assemblies. Taki facilitated her first Child Pedestrian Safety Train-the-Trainer NHTSA workshop on May 29th at the **Safe Kids Coalition-Greater Augusta** office. A total of 14 participants attended the training, including community stakeholders, advocates, law enforcement officers, and after school program directors. **WAGT 26**, a local news station, also attended the training and featured the workshop on their evening news. Taki also presented to:

- Greensboro Elementary School PTO Meeting (Greene Co.)
- Euchee Creek Elementary School Health Fair (Columbia Co.)
- Eagle Ridge Elementary School Career Day (Baldwin Co.)
- Wheel Movement Monthly Meeting (Richmond Co.)
- Healthy Augusta Dream Team Meeting (Richmond Co.)

North Territory – Alicia Hatcher, Senior School Outreach Coordinator

Alicia manages 105 Partner Schools in the North Georgia Territory. In May, Alicia took a lead planning role in coordinating the Forum.

Alicia signed on one new Partner in May.

- **Lovinggood Middle School** in Powder Springs is the newest Partner in North Georgia. Alicia attended and assisted with a Bike Rodeo on May 19th organized by **Safe Kids Cobb County**, Friend of the Resource Center. While at the event, Alicia met Assistant Principal Pat Adair and received the official partner profile. Ms. Adair plans for the school to participate in International Walk to School Day in the fall of 2014 and hold another Bike to School Day during the 2014-2015 school year.

Alicia supported three Bike to School events in her territory.

- Barrow Elementary in Clarke County
- Haw Creek Elementary in Forsyth County
- Lovinggood Middle School in Cobb County

Alicia met with representatives from **Vickery Middle School** and Forsyth County on May 15th. Vickery Middle is an infrastructure winner, and construction is set to begin this summer. The school plans to start Walking School Buses from several nearby neighborhoods at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year. The team plans to meet again after school starts to get a plan in place.

Southwest Territory – Chelsea Carter, School Outreach Coordinator

The Southwest Territory now has 64 partners. **Cowan Road Elementary School**, located in Griffin, dropped out of the program earlier this school year. However, Chelsea met with Valarie Gilbert at the school and discussed advantages of partnership. Ms. Gilbert has now re-enrolled the school and has personally taken on the role of champion.

Chelsea supported four Bike to School events at schools as well as local Bike Rodeos for our participating communities. She also presented the NHTSA Curriculum to two organizations.

Bike to School Day events included:

- **Safe Kids Columbus** hosted a Bike Rodeo May 3rd. During the event, many children and adults were educated on the need for helmets as well as provided with proper helmet fittings. Individuals' bikes were inspected for being in good working order, and some donated bikes were also raffled off to lucky attendants. **Safe Kids Columbus** will be co-hosting a Mini-Rodeo in June along with Safe Routes to School, Clean Air Campaign, and local organizations. See photo at right.
- **Hand-in-Hand Primary School**, Southwest's Partner of the Year, held a trike event in Thomas County where classes rode trikes outside and were taught about the importance of wearing bicycle helmets; Southwest's SOC Chelsea Carter helped to fit each child's helmet, making sure the student understood and could put on and take off the helmet on their own.
- **Hannan Elementary School, Clubview Elementary School** and **J.D. Davis Elementary School** held Bike Safety Assemblies where Corporal Robert Green of the police department spoke about the safety rules of the road as well as helmet safety.



Also in May, Chelsea held two NHTSA workshops.

- Summer camp instructors at the **Thomasville YMCA**
- Columbus area **River Valley Regional Commission Office, Columbus Police Department** and **Safe Kids Columbus**.

Chelsea also presented on the Safe Routes to School program to the **Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Office** in Camilla to encourage increased participation in SRTS activities.

As the school year ended, Chelsea held meetings with prospective schools to discuss the implementation of Safe Routes to School in the next school year. Each school was given an 'activity menu' of possible events and educational opportunities for the future, as well as sample incentives. Meriwether County's **Unity Elementary School**, located in Luthersville, has announced their plan to partner during the next school year; they also plan to participate in International Walk to School Day. While in the area, Chelsea met with the **Three Rivers Regional Commission**. With the development of a new Greenbelt in the Carrollton area, Chelsea anticipates participation growth with schools adjacent to the paths.

Coastal Territory – Patti Sistrunk, Sr. School Outreach Coordinator

In May, Patti continued to support 38 Partners. She presented the NHTSA Curriculum to one school, supported three Bike to School Day events, and conducted one walk audit.

East Broad Street K-8 School in Savannah was named Coastal Partner of the Year by the Resource Center and continued its outstanding efforts in May.

- Responding to community concern about student pedestrian safety at the school, and in response to a hit and run accident involving an East Broad student walking during the weekend, the school enlisted the help of the Resource Center, **Safe Kids Savannah**, and **Memorial Health's Injury Research and Prevention** group to provide pedestrian education. Patti and representatives from the other organizations met in late April to coordinate the educational assemblies. Using the NHTSA Curriculum and other resources, the group presented on May 2nd to four assemblies. All students at East Broad learned who their crossing guards were, learned about distracted walking, and practiced crossing the street safely.
- On May 14th, Patti organized a walk assessment and dismissal observation session at the school. The school administration also developed new dismissal procedures in response to the community's concerns. Local law enforcement officers, City of Savannah Traffic Engineering staff, the Safe Kids Savannah director, and school staff were on hand for the observation. The team made recommendations on how the school could further improve its procedures next school year. See photo at right of team members discussing possible recommendations.



Coastal Bike to School Day and Bike Month events included:

- At **Hubert Middle School** in Savannah, students were encouraged to ride for the Hornet Bike Rally. Students received pencils and bracelets from the Resource Center.
- **Godley Station K-8 School** in Pooler hosted the school's first Safe Routes to School event on May 9th. About 20 students rode bikes to school from the neighborhood adjacent to the school, stopping at three "bike train stations" where students learned hand signals and important bike safety tips. The event on May 9th had support from the Resource Center, **Savannah Bicycle Campaign**, and **Safe Kids Savannah**. The school intends to host another event in October. In the photo at right, students lock bikes to a full Godley Station K-8 bike rack.
- **Charles Ellis Montessori Academy** in Savannah hosted a Bike to School Day on May 7th. Students were encouraged to bike from home and were greeted at the school by volunteers and staff. Students who biked received incentives provided by the Resource Center.
- Patti set up a table at the **Interfaith Hospitality Network** and **AmeriGroup** Bicycle Rodeo in Savannah on Saturday, May 17th at Lake Mayer Community Park. The event drew hundreds of children and their families. The hosts handed out 50 helmets to children and raffled off a bicycle. Patti displayed helmet and bike-safety information, handed out bicycle bookmarks that illustrate hand signals and safety tips, and discussed Safe Routes to School programs and resources with parents and adults.



In May, Patti set a date to meet with **Savannah Bicycle Campaign** and **Safe Kids Savannah** representatives to coordinate a bicycle safety and event calendar for the 2014-15 school year and to organize an on-going Coastal Georgia bike advocacy committee. The committee will maximize area bicycle education resources and encourage collaboration throughout the year.

Marketing

The Resource Center issued a May newsletter mid-month. The Wayfinding newsletter was drafted by Taki and edited by Carol and Alicia. It reminded recipients about National Bike to School Day registration, the Forum, and encouraged schools to complete SRTS tasks such as tallies by the end of the school year. A second email blast was sent during the last week of the month to remind contacts to attend the Forum.



The team worked with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to issue a press release about the Statewide Forum on May 22nd. The team promoted the Forum contacts through Facebook, emails, phone calls, in person meetings, and the website.

Also, Bike to School Day registration was encouraged throughout the month. Thirty-six events were registered; this is a 75% increase over last year's Bike to School Day registrations.

Thirty-day "Look Ahead" Period

The GA SRTS Statewide Forum is on June 6th in Decatur. The team will focus on the Forum during the first week of June.

Through the first half of the month, the team will analyze the project year and finalize deliverables. The project year ends on June 17th.

Additionally, the National Center for SRTS is expected to open International Walk to School Day event registration during the first week of June. The team will promote this to our available school contacts.

The team will work to strengthen and expand the Resource Center's Friend network by meeting with municipality contacts, like-minded organizations, and community groups.

The team will also examine resource needs and begin work on bike education resources and other materials under the new project year scope of work.